

## **In the Night, I Dream of You** by orphan\_account

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**Summary:**

In which Mike has a nightmare.

## **In the Night, I Dream of You**

"Mike."

He heard someone whisper his name. The voice sounded so familiar, but so desperate.

"Mike," it whispered again. It was louder this time, and he could hear it quite a bit better. The voice belonged to El.

"El, where are you?" he asked. She needed help, he could hear it in her voice. And he desperately wanted to be the one to help her.

"Mike," she said again, this time in a normal speaking tone, "I'm lost."

"You're not lost, you're here with me," Mike said, trying to follow her voice. "But I don't see you. Where are you?"

She did not respond this time, and this worried Mike. He looked in every corner of every room for her, but he found nothing. How could this be? He heard her speaking clear as day.

"El?" he asked after neither of them had spoken for a while.

Suddenly, he saw the lights flicker in a chain reaction, starting at the lamp in the basement, and finishing with the light above the stove. This repeated several times as he followed them into the kitchen. When he reached the stove, the lights stayed stagnant for a moment before gradually increasing in brightness.

No, he thought, finally understanding. She was trapped in the Upside Down.

"El, are you there?" he asked.

The lights flickered.

"How do I get to you? I thought you closed the gate," he said, wishing that she would speak to him again.

He didn't know how to help her. If there was a new gate, he had no

way of knowing where it was.

She's stuck there alone, and I have no idea how to help, he thought. She was there to help when they were looking for Will, but who was there to help now?

"El, please talk to me!" he said, growing more desperate.

The lights began to flicker again, this time all at once. He felt someone standing behind him, but spun around to see no one. He ran back into the basement and looked in the spot where he first heard her voice. Still feeling someone behind him, he looked all around the house for the second time that night. There was still no sign of anyone being there except for himself.

"Mike," El whispered once again, this time softer than the times before.

"El!" he exclaimed, running in the direction of the whisper. She repeated his name several times, leading him to the basement - specifically to her fort. But there was nothing there.

The lights stopped at once, and so did the whispers. Mike sat in the fort, feeling exhausted. He listened to the silence for a moment, holding his face in his hands.

"Mike!" he heard her call to him through the silence. He sat up in a panic. He expected to see her in danger, but instead he saw her sleeping soundly on the other side of the room.

Another nightmare, he thought. It wasn't his first since all of the chaos, so he figured he would dismiss it as usual.

But this time was different. Hopper had taken a late shift, so El had the idea that Mike could come over for an innocent sleepover. Now - at nearly 2:00 a.m. - he stared over at her, wondering if she was alright. He couldn't help but imagine the worst. What if the dream was a sign? He thought he could see her breathing normally as if nothing were wrong, but it was hard to tell through the darkness. He wanted so desperately to check on her, but he would feel bad for waking her.

He stood and walked over to where she was laying. He needed to hear her voice - to make sure she was okay.

Maybe she wouldn't mind if I woke her, he thought, recalling the times she had awoken in a panic, and he had rushed to her side to comfort her. But she had never intentionally woken him. He was a light sleeper, and her wellness was his top priority.

"El," he finally whispered, succumbing to his emotions.

She did not wake, so he lightly touched her shoulder and spoke her name once again, but louder.

"Mike?" she asked, sitting up and rubbing her eyes.

He exhaled heavily, as if he had been holding his breath.

"You're okay," he said, throwing his arms around her.

At first she returned his embrace, but soon pulled away and looked at him in confusion.

"What do you mean?" she asked, noticing a single tear on his face.

"I'm sorry," he said as she quickly wiped the tear away and held his hand in hers. "It was just a dream."

"What was just a dream?" she asked.

"It's not important," he said. He kissed her forehead and started toward the spot where he had been sleeping.

"It is important if it makes you sad," she said, stopping him.

He turned back toward her, but looked to the ground. Several tears fell this time, making him feel embarrassed. He was supposed to comfort her, right?

"Mike," she said, standing to meet him. She read his embarrassment well, and squeezed his hand reassuringly. "You can tell me."

He fell into her arms and buried his face into her hair. She could tell

it was something horrible because he held her so tightly.

"You were lost," he mumbled, still holding her close to him, "and I couldn't help you."

She thought for a moment before pulling away. She sat on the bed and gestured for him to sit next to her.

"When I have bad dreams," she started, "you tell me that it is not real, you won't ever let it happen, and everything is okay. Maybe you should believe your own words."

She wiped every tear from his face as he smiled slightly.

"I won't disappear again," she said. "Not without saying goodbye."

"I won't let you disappear again. I promise you that," he said, reaching for her hands.

Once again, he kissed her forehead. But this time, their lips met for a brief moment afterward.

For the remainder of the night, they slept near each other - close enough for comfort, but with just enough space between them so that Mike would not be murdered if Hopper came home early. + a

"Night, El," he said softly.

"Night, Mike."